

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0608

INFO AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMCONSUL BORDEAUX

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE PARIS 16178

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, ELAB, PFOR, SP, FR

SUBJECT: BASQUE PROBLEMS AND SPANISH FOREIGN MINISTER'S

VISIT JUNE 25-27

REF: (A) MADRID 3970 (B) MADRID 4176

1. QUAI SOUTHERN EUROPE DEPUTY DIRECTOR GELADE JUNE
20 LINKED FOREIGN MINISTER CORTINA'S JUNE 25-27
VISIT HERE TO CURRENT HIGH TENSION RESULTING FROM
BASQUE VIOLENCE. HE REMINDED US OF LONG HISTORY OF
BASQUE PROBLEM IN SPANISH-FRENCH RELATIONS, BUT ADMITTED
THAT THIS IS PERIOD OF MAXIMUM AGITATION IN RECENT
TIMES. SPANISH GOVERNMENT, IN QUAI VIEW, DOES NOT
PROPERLY APPRECIATE THAT FRENCH LIBERAL TRADITION
PRECLUDES BOTH TOUGH CONTROL OVER BASQUE SYMPATHIZERS
AND ALSO EXTRADITION FOR POLITICAL CRIMES COMMITTED
OUTSIDE FRANCE. GOS APPARENT REACTION TO THIS CON-
SISTING OF UNOFFICIAL SPONSORSHIP FOR TERRORIST
ACTIVITY AGAINST FRENCH OR SPANISH BASQUES IN FRANCE
IS WHOLLY UNACCEPTABLE TO GOF.

2. FRENCH HOPE TO MAKE THEIR ATTITUDE CLEAR TO
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CORTINA WHO WILL MEET NOT ONLY WITH FOREIGN MINISTER

SAUVAGNARGUES BUT ALSO WITH PRESIDENT GISCARD. NO MEETING IS CURRENTLY SCHEDULED WITH INTERIOR MINISTER PONIATOWSKI, WHO TAKES PERSONAL INTEREST, PER REFS.

3. COMMENT: WE AGREE WITH MADRID'S COMMENT THAT BASQUE PROBLEM IS MOST SERIOUS IRRITANT IN FRANCO-SPANISH RELATIONS. QUAI EVEN FEELS IT IS ONLY IRRITANT: IN FACT, MADRID MUST RECOGNIZE THAT GOF DEMONSTRATED POSITIVE ATTITUDE IN PUBLIC STATEMENT ON RECENT USG INITIATIVES REGARDING SPAIN AND NATO. ALSO FRENCH BELIEVE THAT CORTINA, AS FORMER AMBASSADOR HERE, IS ESPECIALLY RECEPTIVE TO GOF VIEWS. BUT QUAI REALISTICALLY EXPECTS BASQUE PROBLEM WILL CONTINUE TO BE IRRITANT FOR FORESEEABLE FUTURE.
RUSH

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